

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2 and 4-7 are pending in the application.

Claim 3 has been cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 1, 4, and 5 have been amended, and claim 7 has been added.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of cancelled claim 3 and to clarify that the restoring mechanism returns the handlebar to an initial position after the handlebar has been rotated. Support for this amendment is found in original claims 1 and 3, as well as in the specification on page 4, lines 17-26. No new matter is added by the amendment.

Claim 4 has been amended to change its dependency from claim 3 to claim 1. Support for this amendment is found in original claims 1, 3, and 4. No new matter is added by the amendment.

Claim 5 has been amended to depend from claim 2, to correct an obvious error in dependency. Support for the amendment is found in the original claims and in the specification.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's indication that claim 5 is allowable if rewritten in independent form, incorporating the subject matter of any intervening claims. Claim 7 is directed to the subject matter of original claim 5 rewritten in independent form, and incorporating the subject matter of original claims 1, 2, and 3. No new matter is added by the amendment.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Ritchie. This rejection is unwarranted. Present claim 1 is directed to a stationary bike including a restoring mechanism for returning the handlebar from a rotationally displaced position to an initial position. The restoring mechanism includes a coil spring wound around an outer circumference of a rotary shaft, one end of the coil spring being attached to the rotary shaft, and the other end of the coil spring being attached to a tubular member accommodating the rotary shaft. The restoring mechanism returns the handlebar to its initial position after *rotational* displacement of the handlebar.

Contrary to the assertion on page 3 of the Office Action, Ritchie does not teach or suggest the restoring mechanism of claim 1. Mechanism (37) shown in Figure 9 of Ritchie is designed to provide a rocking motion of the handlebar, i.e., up and down movement relative to the neutral position of the handlebar (see the motion arrows in Figure 9, and the description at col. 3, line 62 through col. 4, line 13). The *rocking* motion of Ritchie is not equivalent to the *rotating* motion of the handlebar of claim 1, since Ritchie clearly teaches the rocking motion being independent of rotation of the handlebar (e.g., compare Figure 9 and Figure 10). Ritchie does not teach or suggest a restoring mechanism for returning the handlebar to its initial position after *rotational* displacement. Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable over Ritchie.

Original claims 2-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Ritchie in view of Smithson. This rejection is also unwarranted. The limitations of original claim 3 have been incorporated in claim 1. Claims 2 and 4 depend from claim 1, and incorporate all of the limitations thereof. Accordingly, applicant traverses this rejection with respect to claims 1, 2 and 4. The deficiencies of Ritchie with regard to claim 1 are noted above. Smithson does not cure these deficiencies. The combination of Ritchie and Smithson does not teach or suggest the restoring mechanism of claims 1, 2 and 4. In particular, the combined references do not teach or suggest any rotational biasing of the handlebar at all. Accordingly, claims 1, 2 and 4 are patentable over the combination of the applied references.

Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Ritchie in view of Phillips. Claim 6 depends from claim 1 and includes all of the limitations thereof. The combination of Ritchie and Phillips also does not teach or suggest the handlebar restoring mechanism. Thus, this ground for rejection also should be withdrawn.

Claim 5 was objected to for depending from a rejected claim, but was indicated to be directed to patentable subject matter. Present claim 5 depends directly from claim 2 and indirectly from claim 1. Since the parent claims are patentable over the applied art, claim 5 should be allowable as well. Notwithstanding the foregoing, claim 7 has been added. Claim 7 is directed to the subject matter of claim 5, rewritten in independent form, and replacing the means-plus-function limitations of claim 5 with structural limitations. Based on the Examiner's

comments in the Office Action, claim 7 should be allowed.

Applicant deems that this application is in condition for allowance. Issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance is solicited.



Respectfully submitted,

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